



Emerald
Health and Education
Foundation

How often do you think about the health of your brain? Generally, if we can function we don't give it much bother, but just what is going on between our ears? Is it something that just happens? Or do we direct the activity?

Since our brain is our central computer, every part of our body is in constant contact with it, and it is in constant contact with every part of the body. As one of the prominent contemporary brain researchers tells us: 'When your brain works right, you work right and when your brain has trouble, you have trouble.' (Dr. Daniel Amen).

As with so much of the natural world, the more we find out about the brain, the more we know we don't know. One of the things that has become increasingly evident through the developing technology of SPEC brain imaging is that our life choices do make a powerful impact on the health of our brain. While our brain is what decides what we do, it's our choice of decision about our lifestyle that impacts the ability of the brain to make the best choices and provide the highest level of happiness, well-being and enjoyment in life. Since the brain is dynamic, constantly changing with our life, we have the power to change both our brain age (as far as general age-related deterioration is concerned) and our brain function.

While a twenty-year-old who uses drugs may have a seriously deteriorated brain, as might be seen in a much older person, a sixty-year-old who has practiced brain-healthy habits may still have the brain of a much younger person. The key is holistic—having to do with our overall life habits. Included in this is our diet and nutrition, how we direct our thoughts, how we handle stress, how much exercise we get on a regular basis, what kind of entertainment we engage in, how we choose to interact with ongoing education and how we treat our brain physically. Boxers often do serious damage to their brains from constantly having them banging against the hard skull, while someone who plays tennis is at relatively low risk of damaging their brain from the sport. Using the head to hit a soccer ball doesn't do the brain any good either.

Here are a few tips for keeping your brain at its best:

- ◆ Nourish it properly (A brain-healthy diet is also heart-healthy and anti-cancer)
- ◆ Get aerobic exercise
- ◆ Get eight hours of sleep each night
- ◆ Wear protective gear when participating in activities that could cause injury
- ◆ Don't use your head to hit soccer balls
- ◆ Drink enough water
- ◆ Train yourself to think positive, joyous thoughts
- ◆ Stay away from drugs, caffeine, nicotine and alcohol
- ◆ Stay away from violent, immoral entertainment
- ◆ Keep learning new things
- ◆ Learn to laugh and enjoy life—get the real craic
- ◆ Manage your stress levels
- ◆ Include God in your life

For more information: <http://www.emeraldhef-ie.org/brain&health.htm>

Brad and Sheri Bushey
Emerald Health and Education Foundation
www.emeraldhef-ie.org
(0)51 83 1100